

TOWN OF BROOKER  
REGULAR MONTHLY COUNCIL MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 10, 2024

Present: Steve Acree, Joe Tolleson, Chris Caldwell, Gene Melvin, Charlene Thomas,  
John Maines – Zoom  
Absent: Linda Bennet  
Community: Jazee Crews, Nancy Benkowski, Glenn Ward – Civil/Code Enforcement, Carol Mosley –  
Telegraph, Doug Sanders, Terry Thomas.

Meeting called to order by Gene Melvin, Mayor.  
Pledge of Allegiance!

A motion was made by Chris Caldwell to approve the August 13<sup>th</sup> minutes as presented. Seconded by Steve Acree. Motion passed.

**OPEN BIDS – LAND CLEARING – PROPERTY (17375 Tetstone Avenue)**

Three Bids received. Town Clerk opened bids and made sure insurance and worker’s comp information was included.

1. PSG Concrete & Excavation = \$40,872.25
2. Southern Roots Land Development = \$15,000.00
3. Hamilton Custom Services = \$53,100.00

Southern Roots Land Development was the lowest bid. The council did ask bidder if she was sure she could do all the work for this amount. She assured council that the work would be done. She said the work will be probably start in a couple of weeks.

A motion was made by Steve Acree to go with Southern Roots Land Development. Seconded by Joe Tolleson. Motion passed.

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**John Maines – Attorney:**

He had nothing to present to council.

Gene Melvin mentioned to him about the water valve break on August 27<sup>th</sup>. The Town received a bill from Swamp Cutters in the amount of \$1777.00. Bobby Adams owns the property where the break was at in Shady Oaks subdivision. Mr. Adams had dirt hauled in on his lot and the truck ran over cut off valves and broke them. Mr. Adams called Swamp Cutters and told him they broke the valve. The Town was not notified of the break. There were no calls on the landline telephone or the cell phone advising the Town of the break. Terry Thomas did receive a call from Bernard Carter but he was not at home at the time. Mr. Maines said he would be glad to look into this and let the Town Clerk know his decision on how to handle this. He did ask council to go ahead and authorize the Town Clerk to pay the bill if he sees that we should pay. Council said okay.

**Fire Department – Steve Acree:**

Gene Melvin mentioned to council about meeting with Diane Andrews, Ben Carter, Charlene Thomas and himself on Fire Grant. Ben Carter did provide pictures of the truck and the building. The Engine will cost around \$475,000.00. That will leave us from the \$662,500.00 around \$187,500.00. Per Ben he thinks we can purchase a Brush Truck for the \$187,500.00. We only have one year to use this money. Next year we will reapply and hope to get the funds to purchase a Rescue and a Tanker. The truck will come from E-One in Ocala. It is taking around 18 months to receive an Engine. As long as we designate the money within the year we will be okay. Carol Mosley, Telegraph, asked whose name the title of

these vehicles will be in? Gene reported that the grant was given to the Town of Brooker and the vehicles will be titled with the Town of Brooker. Ben Carter will handle the ordering of the Engine and Brush Truck. No money down to place the order for trucks.

The Fire Department building was discussed. We have \$506,096.00 to build a building. The building will have separate sleeping quarters and sprinklers will be installed in sleeping quarters. The size of the building will be 1,800-2,000 square feet. The majority of this money will be used for prep, site, and design. There want be much left over to do anything else. Gene mentioned that Diane Andrews did say she wanted all money to be spent and if we can start the building we will do so. We have 5 years to spend the money. Next year we will reapply and hopefully get the remainder of funds to complete the building. We will get quotes on whether the building should be block or metal. It will have a shingle roof. Clerk is checking into seeing if we can piggyback off of contract Bradford County has with vendors.

**Town Clerk – Charlene Thomas:**

1. Past due water report passed out. Still out \$339.46. 3 meters were cut-off for non payment.
2. ARPA funds have to be obligated by December 31, 2024. We have \$1,273.98 left over. We do have \$4,400.00 designated for new doors at Community Center. Hopefully we will have them shortly. We need to spend the rest. I will order mulch for playground. I will see what is left and see if we can get another piece of equipment for playground.
3. I did check with John Maines concerning our Procurement Policy not having a line item saying we can piggyback. He gave me the wording and I added Line “G” to our Procurement Policy. We can now piggyback off Bradford Counties contract with vendors. This will help us so we want have to bid out everything. A motion was made by Chris Caldwell to add Line “G” to our Procurement Policy. Seconded by Steve Acree. Motion passed.
4. We will have a separate Public Hearing on September 24<sup>th</sup> at 7:00p.m. for 2<sup>nd</sup> reading for applying for a CDBG grant. We will also approve the millage and budget before this meeting.
5. Modular Training Building – located at 11842 N. Bloxham Street  
We have asked Bradford County to have the building torn down for us. But, we received an email saying they are to busy to help us with this. I contacted John Maines and he said we can declare the building surplus and have it disposed of. He told me to let Bradford County know we were declaring it surplus. I sent Ben Carter an email. I had someone contact me and was interested in moving the modular building. Josh Hall will be moving the building.
6. Swamp Cutters, Josh Davis, will be finishing up moving the 6 meters we hired him to do for the In-Kind service we agreed to do on the meter grant. The amount agreed upon is \$10,800.00.
7. I got with the Mayor concerning the areas in Town that need cleaning up. The County doesn’t have time to help us anymore. He suggested I get with Joe Tolleson and make a list of areas that need cleaning up. I contacted EMT Affordable Lawn Care and Josh Hall to get an estimate. We received one estimate from Jack Kennedy. His estimate is in the amount of \$1,300.00. The list is attached of the areas to be cleaned. A motion was made by Steve Acree to pay \$1,300.00 EMT Affordable Lawn Care. Seconded by Chris Caldwell. Motion passed.
8. Waste Pro contacted me and said starting October 1<sup>st</sup> the garbage rate will change from \$12.96 to \$13.28. I will put on customers water bill.

**Accounting Clerk – Charlene Thomas:**

1. Went over Revenues and Expenditures for August 2024.
2. Our insurance with Florida League of Cities went up this year. This year’s cost is \$30,974.00.
3. At the October meeting I will need to do several budget amendments.

4. At the August council meeting the council asked me to let them know an amount for the extra work I am doing. I advised the council that the previous Town Clerk was working 12 hours a week. Right now I am working from 20 – 24 hours a week. I would like to double my present salary. A motion was made by Steve Acree to increase my pay by doubling it. Seconded by Chris Caldwell. Motion called for. Gene Melvin abstained from voting. 3 yes votes.

**Water Department – Gene Melvin:**

1. He reported that he had spoke with Bernard Carter concerning Well #1. Prestige was called.

**Sanitation, Road/Streets, Recreation/Parks – Nothing to Report**

**Ground Maintenance/Mowing – Joe Tolleson:**

1. Glenn Ward attended the meeting. He said he had the semi-trucks move from parking on SR 231. The vehicle was removed from Parker Street so cleaning can proceed. The owner of the property on Ward/Charlotte passed away. The trailer has been sold and he told family that property has to be cleaned up. He is sending a letter to Joe Favre concerning his property. He is working with George Washington.
2. The council mentioned to Glenn Ward that Bradford County needs to come and clean up around the tower they have on our property. Property belonging to Isaac Coleman on Charlotte was mentioned to Glenn.

**Old Business:**

1. Reading of Resolution 2024-05 modifying water rates effective October 1<sup>st</sup>. A motion was made by Joe Tolleson to enact and read by title only Resolution 2024-05. Clerk read Resolution. Seconded by Chris Caldwell. Motion passed. Clerk will put new rate on water bill.
2. Doug Sanders mentioned the pickle ball court will cost around \$150,000.00. We are requesting \$200,000.00. The FRDAP application cycle ends September 30<sup>th</sup>.

**New Business:**

1. We received an email from Brooker Community School asking the Town to consider a sponsorship as a community partner. They are asking for a contribution of \$1,000.00. A banner will be displayed with the Town's information. A motion was made by Chris Caldwell to become a partner in the amount of \$1,000.00. Seconded by Steve Acree. Motion passed. The Clerk asked Steve Acree if he would like to work on creating the banner for the Town. He agreed.

Checks approved:

A motion was made by Steve Acree to approve the bills. Seconded by Joe Tolleson. Motion passed. Gene Melvin made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Time: 8:15p.m.

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Cecil E. (Gene) Melvin, Mayor

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Charlene Thomas, Town Clerk